



NCLIS

U.S. National Commission on  
Libraries and Information Science

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July 31, 2002

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services,  
and Education Appropriations  
United State Senate  
731 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-1502

The Honorable Arlen Specter  
Ranking Minority Member, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and  
Human Services, and Education Appropriations  
United States Senate  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510-3802

Dear Senators Harkin and Specter:

I am writing to you as Chairperson of the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science to thank you for including funding for the Commission in the FY 2003 appropriations bill (S. 2766) recently reported by your committee and to express my concern about a statement that was included in the related portion of Senate Report 107-216.

The report includes the following statement:

The Committee notes that legislation exists to create a joint Museum and Library Advisory Board to advise Congress and the Administration on the development of national policy relating to libraries.

In fact, S. 2611, the bill to reauthorize the Museum and Library Services Act, establishes the Museum and Library Services Board merely to advise the director of the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) as the National Museum Services Board currently does. It does not replicate the Commission's authority to advise the President and the Congress, state and local government and others.

The exact language in both S.2611 and H.R.3487 is:

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Museum and Library Services Board shall advise the Director on general policies with respect to the duties, powers, and

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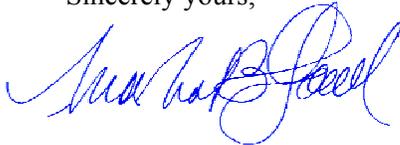
authority of the Institute relating to museum and library services, including financial assistance awarded under this title.

Prior to the introduction of the Senate bill, I expressed my unqualified support for reauthorization in written testimony submitted for the record of the April 10 hearing held by the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions. I remain strongly committed to the legislation, including the creation of the Museum and Library Services Board. Nevertheless, while beneficial for IMLS, the new Museum and Library Services Board does create the potential for confusion between the missions of Board and the Commission, as happened in Senate Report 107-216.

Finally, I would like to address a related issue. There have been suggestions from the Office of Management and Budget that IMLS could assume the responsibilities of the Commission. IMLS administers Federal funds for libraries and museums. Its responsibilities are complementary to the Commission, not duplicative. By statute, the Commission is assigned other obligations, such as conducting research on the information needs of the public; appraising the adequacies and deficiencies of current resources; developing overall plans for meeting the information needs of the people; advising the Congress and the President, as well as Federal, State, local and private agencies on these matters; promoting research and development activities; and publishing recurring and special reports. IMLS could not assume the responsibilities of the Commission without a substantial revision to its authorizing statute and additional funding.

I appreciate the opportunity to correct the false impression created by the language in Senate Report 107-216. If you would like additional information on this matter, please contact Judy Russell, Acting Executive Director of the Commission by phone at 202-606-9200 or by e-mail at [jrussell@nclis.gov](mailto:jrussell@nclis.gov).

Sincerely yours,



Martha B. Gould  
Chairperson

CC: Members of the Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Members of the House Appropriations Committee, Subcommittee on Labor, Health  
and Human Services, and Education

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The Honorable Robert Byrd;  
The Honorable Daniel Inouye;  
The Honorable Fritz Hollings;  
The Honorable Patrick Leahy;  
The Honorable Barbara Mikulski;  
The Honorable Harry Reid;  
The Honorable Herb Kohl;  
The Honorable Patty Murray;  
The Honorable Byron Dorgan;  
The Honorable Dianne Feinstein;  
The Honorable Richard Durbin;  
The Honorable Tim Johnson;  
The Honorable Mary Landrieu;  
The Honorable Jack Reed;  
The Honorable Ted Stevens;  
The Honorable Thad Cochran;  
The Honorable Pete Domenici;  
The Honorable Christopher "Kit" Bond;  
The Honorable Mitch McConnell;  
The Honorable Conrad Burns;  
The Honorable Richard Shelby;  
The Honorable Judd Gregg;  
The Honorable Robert Bennett;  
The Honorable Ben Nighthorse Campbell;  
The Honorable Larry Craig;  
The Honorable Kay Bailey Hutchinson;  
The Honorable Michael DeWine